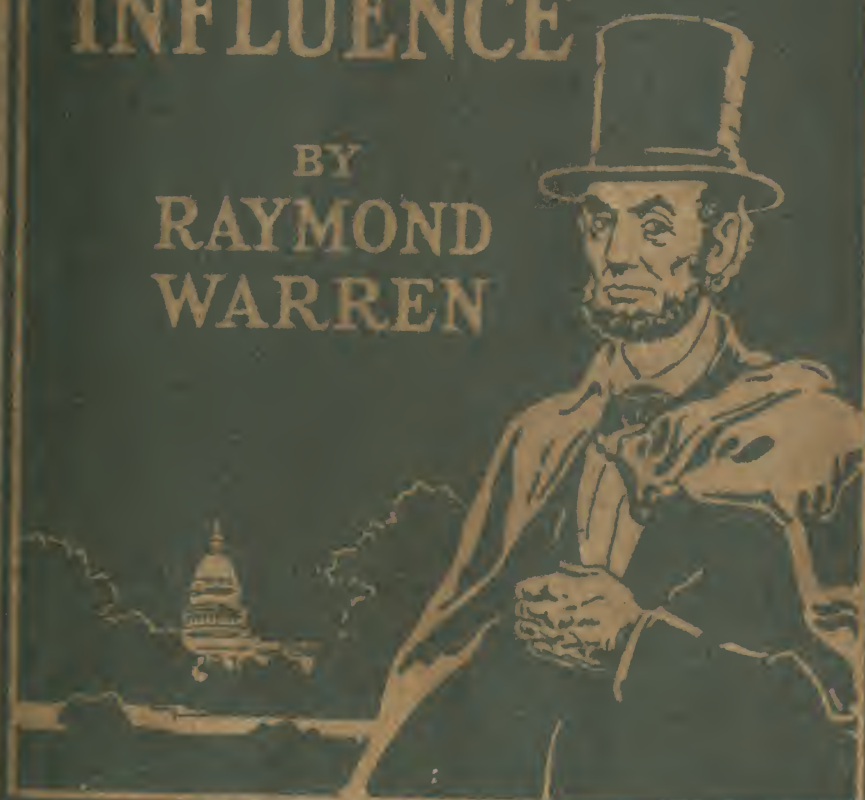
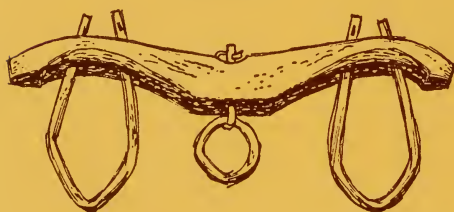


ABRAHAM  
LINCOLN  
AS A  
SPIRITUAL  
INFLUENCE

BY  
RAYMOND  
WARREN




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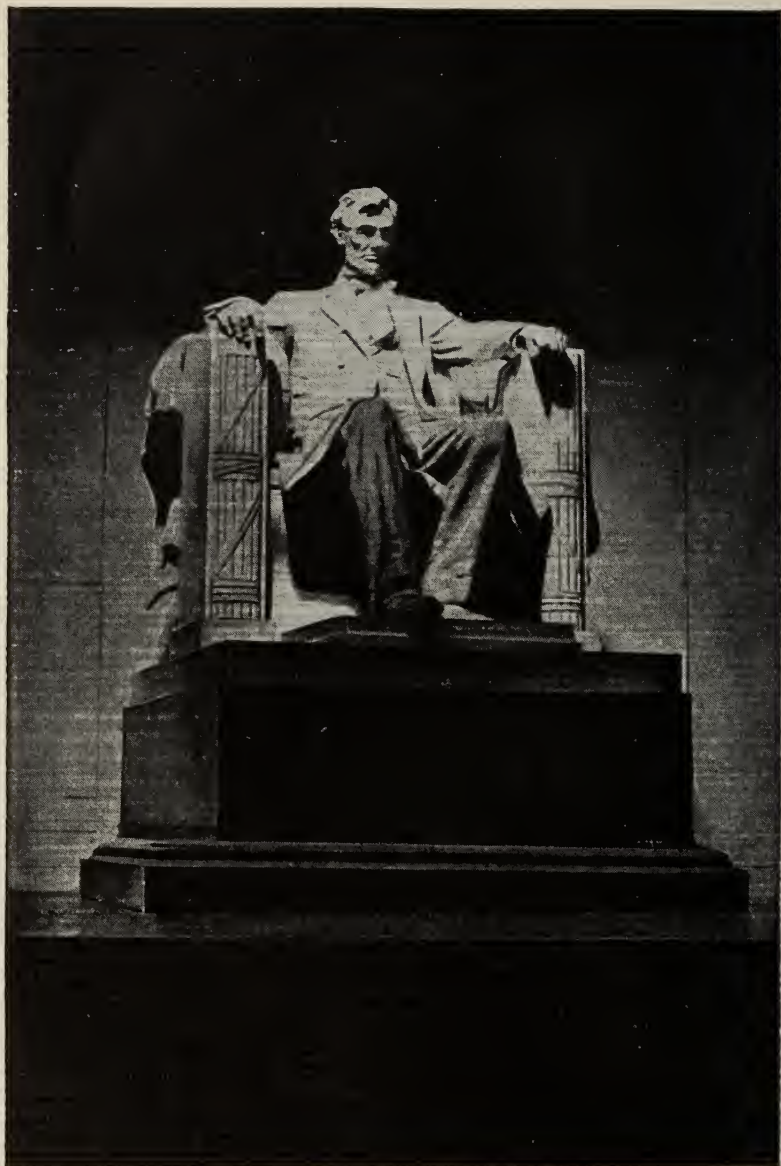
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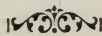


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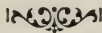
STATUE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN, IN MARBLE, BY DANIEL CHESTER  
FRENCH IN THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL AT WASHINGTON, D. C.

Abraham Lincoln  
as a  
Spiritual Influence

By  
Raymond Warren



*With a Foreword by*  
J. GILCHRIST LAWSON



Chicago  
The PROGRESSIVE CENTURY Co.  
1933



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ABRAHAM LINCOLN  
AS A  
SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE

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## FOREWORD

Fortunate indeed is the person who has read Raymond Warren's dramatized biography of Abraham Lincoln, *The Prairie President*, and his *Abe Lincoln, Kentucky Boy*, and who possesses this beautiful little brochure on *Abraham Lincoln* as a *Spiritual Influence*. To that person Lincoln will have become a living reality.

The writer of this foreword is thoroughly familiar with the literature about Lincoln, has visited most of the places where he lived, and has become absorbed in the study of his life and character; but nothing else has made Lincoln so graphically real to him as have Col. Warren's masterly versions of the life and works of the Great Emancipator. After reading them we feel as though we had lived with Lincoln, talked with him, shared in his sufferings and rejoicings, and had known him from the cradle to the grave. In fact, Lincoln no longer seems dead, but as one of the most real and living persons we have ever known.

In this treatise Col. Warren reveals the real secret of Abraham Lincoln's immortal greatness, and tells what has endeared him to the multitudes. It was his greatness of soul—his spiritual greatness. He was the embodiment of America's fundamental idealism. His ambitions were not toward the attainment of wealth and fame, but to see the United States free from slavery and all other evils. His great heart yearned to do away with all misery, ignorance, poverty, and crime; that the country should be united in the full enjoyment of freedom, prosperity, sobriety, and the worship of the living God.

Raymond Warren—more than any other writer, we believe—has made vivid and real these great spiritual qualities in the character of Abraham Lincoln; and to him the people of this and other countries owe a debt of everlasting gratitude.

James Gilchrist Lawson.

"Abraham Lincoln as a Spiritual Influence" first was a Lincoln Day address, delivered over the radio on February 12, 1931. Toward the close of that year, Mr. Burridge D. Butler, Publisher of *Prairie Farmer*, privately printed it in a limited number of small booklets which were distributed among his personal friends. One of these booklets came into the hands of the editor of a widely circulated weekly devoted to Christianity, and he reprinted it in his paper on the following February.

In complying with the great number of requests that this little work be made permanently accessible to the public, I have carefully revised the manuscript, made numerous additions to it, and borrowed two pages from one of my other books because they contain thoughts in keeping with the theme.

The earthly labors of Abraham Lincoln ended before the majority of us were born; but the imperishable record that he has left will serve to inspire and encourage the human race until time shall end. In the pages that follow, I have endeavored to explain the spiritual side of Lincoln—that part of his life which will endure forever, and which all of us are privileged to share.

Raymond Warren

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

## AS A

### SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE

**B**EFORE us were four rows of broad stone steps leading up to the temple-like building which crowned the crest of the little knoll. On each side of these steps the well-kept grass spread like a luxurious carpet, and on each side of the building, as if on sentinel duty, stood great trees, richly garbed in summer foliage. Against the brilliant blue sky which formed a background for all of this, soft, pearl-tinted clouds drifted, propelled by the gentle summer breeze.

It was one of those pictures which Nature and man had combined in making beautiful; it was a picture such as a painter of mythological subjects would have revelled in; for here, surrounded by colors of bright and sombre greens, blues, purples, and browns, stood a temple which, twenty centuries before, might have been dedicated to some Greek or Roman deity.

To this spot, in one of the most isolated districts in America, we are told that a hundred thousand people come annually—an excellent argument that place does not make the man, but that the man makes the place. And after one of these pilgrims out of that hundred thousand has walked up these steps and stands before the six granite pillars of the portico, he reads high above them, from letters chiselled deep into the stone, these words:

HERE  
OVER THE LOG CABIN WHERE LINCOLN  
WAS BORN, DESTINED TO PRESERVE THE  
UNION AND FREE THE SLAVE, A GRATE-  
FUL PEOPLE HAVE DEDICATED THIS  
MEMORIAL TO UNITY, PEACE AND  
BROTHERHOOD AMONG THESE STATES

Just underneath are carved words from one of the most sublime sentiments that Abraham Lincoln ever uttered:

WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE, WITH  
CHARITY FOR ALL

And then the visitor enters and sees for the first time the little cabin where the noble Lincoln was born. How small it is! And how strangely its crude architecture contrasts with the costly structure that encloses it.

As the visitor stands in silent contemplation before these aged, roughly-hewn logs, notched and plastered together with clay, the elegantly designed walls and windows of the shrine seem to melt away—the little cabin alone remains a reality. In reverie its beholder sees it as it was on that February dawn when the baby, Abraham Lincoln was born.

Then the mind drifts off to a far-away country, into a long-gone century; and there comes a vague impression of another babe, this one born in a manger—the Christ Child. Was Its nativity more humble or more depressing than this? One was the Example, the other the follower; the two, in their different spheres, the most lofty examples that have ever been given to mankind.

—Written at Hodgenville, Kentucky, and reprinted from "Abe Lincoln, Kentucky Boy," through courtesy of the publishers, The Reilly & Lee Co.

\* \* \* \* \*

A LITTLE while ago I was asked the question: "Just what is the reason that Lincoln holds the predominant place in the affection of the American people, and why does their interest grow keener as the years roll on; wherein is the secret of his hold upon our hearts?"

To avoid a lengthy discussion I gave the usual stereotyped answer—that Lincoln was a penniless boy, self-educated, who, through his own efforts and abilities became President of the United States; born in a log cabin, etc. Yes, he was born in





*Photographed especially for the author.*

GOVERNMENT OWNED SHRINE AT HODGENVILLE, KENTUCKY, WHICH  
ENCLOSES THE CABIN WHERE ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS BORN



a log cabin, educated himself, and became President; and so was Washington—our first President—born in a log cabin and practically self-educated; and so were Andrew Jackson, and Zachary Taylor, and Franklin Pierce and Millard Fillmore.

Humble origin, and the struggle and triumph over poverty's handicaps, are so common in the life stories of our great men, both in political and civil life, that they are almost a part of the formula of American success. Ordinarily we take all of this for granted and give it little analytical thought.

Therefore, we must look beyond the circumstances of Lincoln's humble birth and early struggles to find the true solution to this question. The universal appeal of Lincoln is, I am convinced, almost entirely a spiritual one; for Lincoln's life is the greatest modern exemplification of the teachings and principles of the Christ on the part of a man, intensely human, that we have of record and common knowledge.

Despite cynical opinions to the contrary, we are a Christian nation; though our Christianity is widely varied and often grotesque in practice. But back of it all, there is that groping—the longing—for the Truth, that Truth that shall make men free. It is a far cry through the Centuries from the shores of the lake of Galilee to—say—those of Lake Michigan, fringed by colossal skyscrapers and modern machine-operated farms, with aeroplanes gliding overhead; and it is little wonder, after all, that in our highly-keyed lives we miss much of the meanings of those simple, beautiful words uttered amid oriental surroundings and the primitive conditions of a long-gone age. Indeed, the modern pilgrim starting out to literally follow in the footsteps of the Master would be very apt to encounter many unpleasant realities, which might even include confinement in a jail or lunatic asylum.

It is for that reason, I think, that in our groping, we unconsciously absorb the divine spirit of the Christ in its application to our conditions, as it glows through the pages of Lin-



coln's life. There we find our own hopes, our own ambitions, our own sorrows, and our own trials mirrored; and there, too, we often find the practical Christian way of meeting them; for the life of Lincoln is a perfect working-example of those divine rules promulgated in the Sermon on the Mount.

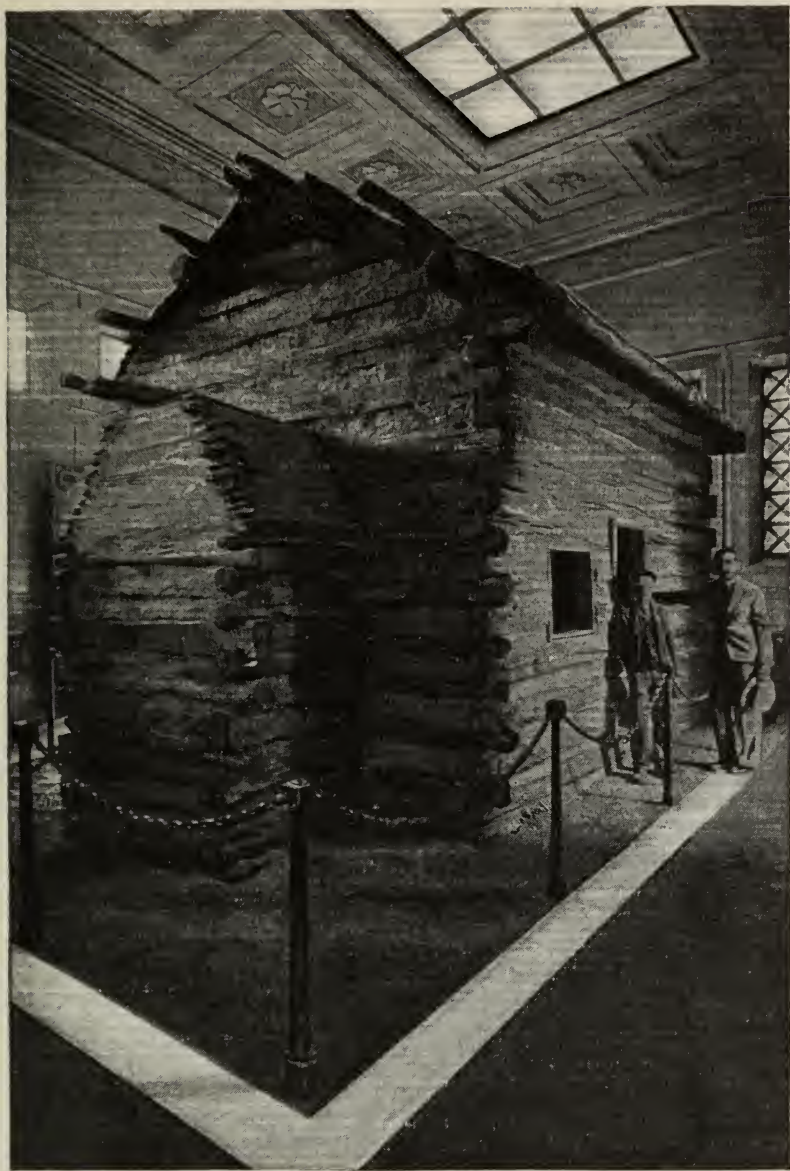
In October, 1864, in response to a delegation of Negroes who had journeyed from Baltimore to present to "Massa Lincoln" an elaborately bound Bible, he said: "In regard to the Great Book, I have only to say that it is the best gift which God has given to man."

The Bible had been the main source of Lincoln's education, the basis of his pure literary style, and the foundation of his system of righteousness expressed in law: it was to remain the predominant influence throughout his days. Lincoln's speeches, state papers and correspondence demonstrate this Biblical influence by the brevity, beauty and clarity of their perfect English. And from the pen of no other President, do we find so many references to God, and invocations for His divine guidance. In countless numbers, these documents seem to be inspired with the very spirit of the Lord's Prayer.

Yes, our reverence of the memory of Abraham Lincoln is due to the spiritual influence that it exerts upon us as a nation and as individuals. I have found that each phase, and almost every act of his life, can be paralleled by one or more passages from the lips of Jesus as recorded in the Four Gospels.

"**G**IVE to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away."—Matthew, 5th chapter, 42nd verse. This would be considered very bad business advice, but it is excellent Christianity—and a definite, life-long part of the Christianity of Abraham Lincoln.

It would be impossible to estimate the number of cases Lincoln conducted for poor people in the courts of the old Eighth Judicial District of Illinois without pay; and touching



*Photographed especially for the author.*

**LOG CABIN IN WHICH ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS BORN  
ON FEBRUARY 12TH 1809**



proof exists in hundreds of instances of a wide variety of other efforts on his part to help those in distress. Lack of space permits the citation of but a few of these documents:

*"My old friend, Henry Chew, the bearer of this, is in a strait for some furniture to commence housekeeping. If any person will furnish him twenty-five dollars worth, and he does not pay for it by the 1st of January next, I will.*

*A. Lincoln"*

*September 25, 1858.*

The not surprising sequel to this, which I hope that Mrs. Lincoln did not see, is contained in the following:

*Urbana, February 16, 1859*


*"Hon. A. Lincoln,  
Springfield, Illinois.*

*My Dear Friend: I herewith inclose your order which you gave your friend Henry Chew. You will please send me a draft for the same and oblige, yours,*

*S. Little."*

These letters become even more interesting when we compare them to the words of Jesus when he related the story of the good Samaritan, given in the 10th chapter of Luke: *"And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, 'Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.'"*

While he was President, Lincoln wrote piles of checks for the needy. The best known of these is a characteristic draft on the Riggs National Bank of Washington for Five Dollars, to "a colored man with one leg"; another is an order on the same bank to pay three dollars to Mr. Johnson, "a sick man."

 NCE, while driving through the mud of Central Illinois, Lawyer Lincoln was parrying the gibes of his companions because of the new broadcloth suit which he was wearing. As they approached the little town of Paris,



the party's attention was attracted to a pig stuck fast in the mud and squealing lustily. They all laughed at the porker's absurd plight, but its real distress soon overcame Lincoln's sense of the humorous, and in spite of the jeers of his comrades, he climbed off of his horse, rescued the animal, and had the satisfaction of hearing its grateful grunts as it scampered away. Of course the new suit was covered with mire.

On another occasion his fellow lawyers were both annoyed and amused to see him stop, hitch his horse, and crawl around in the underbrush to catch two young birds fluttering on the ground at the edge of the grove. Having finally caught the fledglings, he hunted from tree to tree until he found the nest from which they had fallen. An hour later, when he overtook his companions, they laughed at this, as a childish way of wasting time.

"Boys," said Lincoln, "you may laugh—but I could not have slept well tonight if I had not saved those little birds. Their cries, and those of their distracted mother, would have rung in my ears."

In the 25th chapter of Matthew we find this—which I believe covers these incidents perfectly: "... *Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*"

ALL of Lincoln's futile pleas to the South, and the slaveholder, can well be summed up in these words of the Master: "*Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.*"—Mark, 7th chapter, 9th verse.

And the ultimate fate of the nation, if it remain divided on the slavery question, Lincoln read in these divine words, also from the book of Luke: "*And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.*" So profoundly was Lincoln impressed by the great truth in these words that he applied them to one of his most powerful

arguments against slavery during the famous debates with Douglas. It has gone into the pages of history as "The House Divided" speech.

Lincoln always hated slavery, yet he realized perfectly that, according to the Constitution as it then existed, the slaveholder was invested with legal property rights in his slaves. And Lincoln believed literally in Christ's admonition to "*Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.*" As President he would have prevented the Civil War by rendering to the taskmaster the price of the slave; he would, by that peaceful and more economical method, have lifted the bondman out of his degradation and rendered him unto God's enlightenment.

Lincoln proposed that \$400 be paid for each slave; a good price in the current market. Estimated on this basis there were about \$750,000 worth of slaves in Delaware. The cost of conducting the war was approximately two million dollars a day; and for one-third of one day's expense all of the slaves in Delaware could have been purchased! All of the slaves in Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri could have been bought, at the same rate, for less than the cost of the war for eighty-seven days: and you will recall that it lasted for more than four years.

He was prevented from doing this, and the war came. The plan was objected to by the Cabinet on the ground that it would be far too expensive to be practical. Time has proven Lincoln wiser than his advisers—for events demonstrated that from the standpoint of economy his course would have been far better.

THE war came. In what strange world the simple country attorney found himself; President of the United States—Commander-in-Chief of the Army—and the Navy! Lincoln never felt more lonely nor more God-forsaken than during the weeks which followed his first call for volunteers, after it had begun to bear its bitter fruit. "*And he*

*saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death: tarry ye here and watch. And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.*”—Mark, 14th chapter, verses 34 and 35.

An Illinois friend of Lincoln related: “I called upon him one day in the early part of the war. He had just written a pardon for a young soldier sentenced to be shot for sleeping at his post. After reading it to me, he remarked: ‘I could not think of going into eternity with the blood of this poor young man on my skirts. It is not to be wondered at, that a boy raised on a farm, probably in the habit of going to bed at dark, should, when required to watch, fall asleep.’”

Lincoln ultimately took new hope in the thought: “*Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.*” The War Department files of 1861 to 1865 contain many hundreds of telegrams which testify to the abundant mercy—the compassion for human weaknesses—of this man. I reproduce three of these, selected at random:

*War Department,  
Washington, D. C.  
October 8, 1862*

*Major-General Mead, Army of Potomac:*

*I am appealed to in behalf of August Blittersdorf, at Mitchell's Station, Va., to be shot tomorrow as a deserter. I am unwilling for any boy under eighteen to be shot, and his father affirms that he is yet under sixteen. Please answer. His regiment or company not given me.*

*A. Lincoln.*

\* \* \* \*

*Executive Mansion,  
Washington, D. C.  
December 17, 1863.*

*Major-General Hurlbut, Memphis, Tenn.:*

*I understand you have under sentence of death, a tall old man by the name of Henry F. Luckett. I personally knew him,*





*Photographed especially for the author.*

**"THE SINKING SPRING" ON THE LINCOLN FARM AT  
HODGENVILLE, KENTUCKY**



*and did not think him a bad man. Please do not let him be executed unless upon further order from me, and in the meantime send me a transcript of the record.*

*A. Lincoln.*

\* \* \* \*

*Executive Mansion,  
Washington, D. C.  
November 3, 1863.*

*Major-General Mead, Army of Potomac:*

*Samuel Willers, private in company B, Forty-Ninth Pennsylvania Volunteers, writes that he is to be shot for desertion on the 6th instant. His story is rather a bad one and yet he tells it so frankly, that I am somewhat interested in him. Has he been a good soldier except the desertion? About how old is he?*

*A. Lincoln.*

\* \* \* \*

THE positive test of man's belief in God is his love for humanity. "*For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?*"—First Epistle of John, 4th chapter, 20th verse. One of the keystones of Abraham Lincoln's character was brotherly love. He loved his friends, and when those among them fell in battle during the Civil War his grief was profound. His lamentations over the death of Colonel Edward D. Baker were remembered by his associates, and his touching letter of condolence to the parents of the martyred young Elmer Ellsworth, who had accompanied him on the railroad journey to Washington, is permanently preserved.

Nor did Lincoln's heart bleed only for the griefs of those of his own acquaintance, as this famous letter amply demonstrates:

*Executive Mansion,  
Washington, Nov. 21, 1864.*

*To Mrs. Bixby, Boston, Mass.*

*Dear Madam:*

*I have been shown in the files of the War Department a*

*statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any word of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.*

*Yours very sincerely and respectfully,*

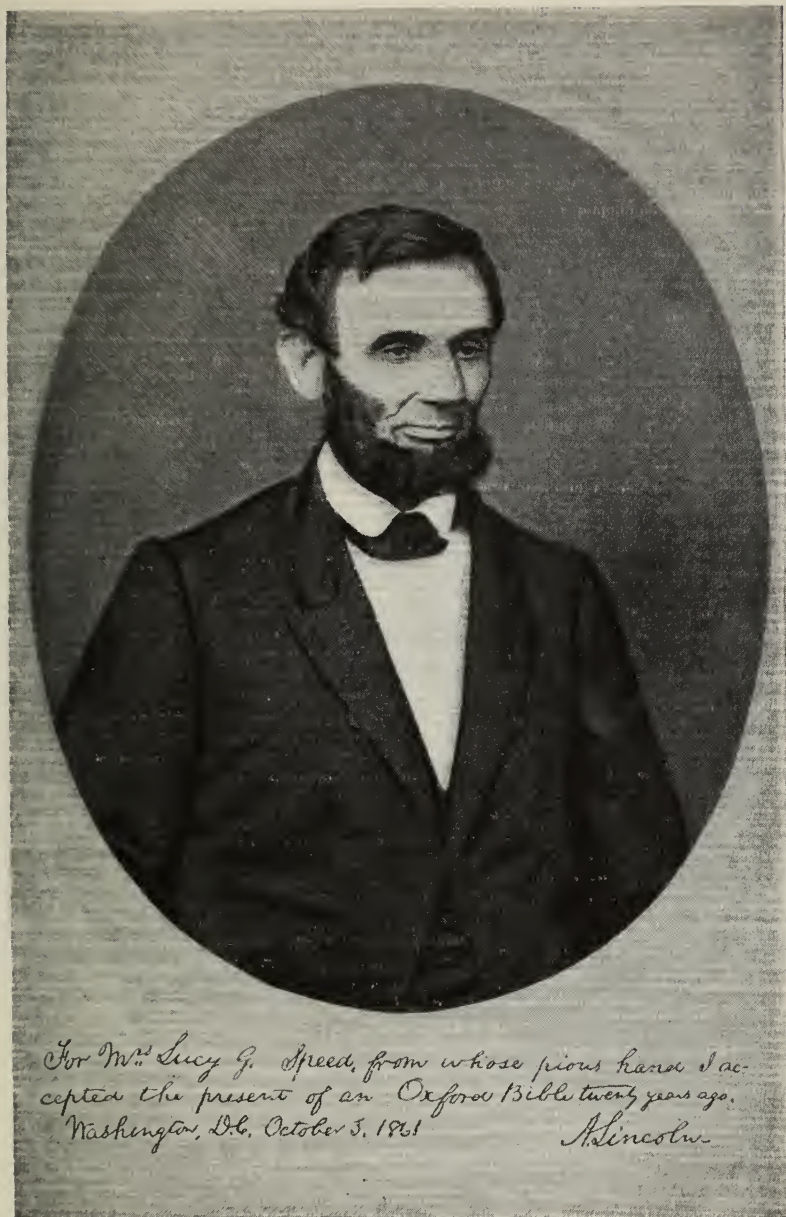
*A. Lincoln.*

Lincoln's love for children was similar to that of Him who said "*Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for such is the kingdom of heaven.*" Numerous are the anecdotes handed down to us which tell of the pranks of the Lincoln boys, — "Tad" and "Willie" — how they romped about with their father in his law office at Springfield, as they did later through the stately halls of the White House. There is no known instance of Lincoln ever being angry at a child.

"**B**UT I say unto you which hear, *Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you. Bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you.*" — Luke, 6th chapter, 27th and 28th verses.

Lincoln did this, literally, throughout his life. The extreme magnanimity of this man renders unique among all of the rulers that the earth has ever known. He practiced this divine principle both in its application to individuals and to the enemy in the field. "I have not suffered by the South," he said, "I have suffered with the South. Their sorrow has been my sorrow—their pain has been my pain. What they have lost, I have lost. And what they have gained, I have gained." Yes, Abraham Lincoln loved the South as well as the North.





*For Mrs. Lucy F. Speed, from whose pious hands I ac-  
cepted the present of an Oxford Bible twenty years ago.  
Washington, D.C., October 3, 1861*

*A. Lincoln*

*From a photographic copy made especially for this work.*

**ABRAHAM LINCOLN FROM A RARE PHOTOGRAPH MADE DURING THE  
FIRST YEAR OF HIS PRESIDENCY**



Edwin M. Stanton, among other things had called Lincoln "a big baboon," yet Lincoln recognized his peculiar fitness for the office of Secretary of War, and appointed him. Stanton was to learn not only to appreciate Lincoln, but to love him. Lincoln explained Stanton's case in this way: "If a man cease attacking me, I never remember the past against him."

*"And if thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone."*—Matthew, 18th chapter, 15th verse. When Lincoln appointed William H. Seward, Secretary of State, the latter, assuming that Lincoln was a man of low mentality, without ability to direct the government, proceeded to write the President a letter in which he proposed himself as a dictator, to do the actual work of the chief executive. Instead of dismissing and disgracing this assumptious minister, Lincoln merely told him in private that he, Abraham Lincoln, was President, and rested content to let time prove his abilities of leadership.

After George B. McClellan was made Commanding General of the Union Army, he repeatedly insulted the President, but with his usual forbearance, Lincoln said: "If McClellan will only give us victories, I am willing to stand and hold his horse." But those victories never came and McClellan had to go.

When Secretary Chase's plots to supplant him in the White House were reported, the President amazed his informants by saying that if Chase could do the "hard job" better, and the people wanted him, he was willing to step aside and give way to the disgruntled Secretary of the Treasury.

PEOPLE who visited Lincoln at the White House said that his was the saddest face they had ever seen. To one woman he said: "I shall never be glad any more—the springs of life are wearing away and I shall not last." On that cold, drizzly morning that Lincoln stood on the rear platform of the little train at Springfield that was to take him to Washington, as he looked down into the faces of his friends,



he realized that he was entering his Gethsemane, and that he probably would have to lay down his life for that cause to which it had been dedicated. With tears in his eyes, he said:

“My friends: No one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him, who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell.”

The whistle blew; the years of preparation were ended, the martyrdom had begun; Springfield and its people would see him never more. Even then, plots were under way to kill him. Four years and two months later the assassin came, and Abraham Lincoln paid “that last full measure of devotion” of which he had so feelingly spoken at Gettysburg.

*“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”—John, 15:13.* And it was in exactly this manner that Abraham Lincoln gave his life for his country—for you and for me—even as the Christ gave His for the world. We, who have never seen him yet, feel daily the influence of his noble, kindly life and cherish the heritage of his example among our most precious possessions.

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